



**Date: March 30, 2006**

**Topic: 2006 AD Pay Plan**

**Issue:**

The 2006 AD pay plan will have 12 pay bands (AD-A through AD-L) rather than the previous AD-1 through AD-5. While the majority of the positions will have an increased pay rate, some position's rates will be reduced due to classifications and leveling.

**Background:**

In 2002 the National Wildfire Coordinating Group asked the Incident Business Practices Working Team to analyze the use of the AD pay plan, its covered positions and associated pay rates. This review was to ensure the Congressional authority establishing this plan was being applied to its original intent and was being used consistently across departments and agencies. The result of the effort was a new pay plan which expanded the pay categories to 12 from five and identified pay rates based on specific duties and responsibilities.

In collaboration with Subject Matter Experts and Human Resource Specialists, positions were classified and a revised pay plan was developed that clarified language and developed consistent uses and pay rates across agencies and geographic areas.

**Key Points:**

- The original revised plan proposed for 2005 set pay rates, based on job classification and evaluation of duties at the equivalent of a step 1 in the WG/GS pay scale. This caused the rates for approximately 80 percent of the positions in the plan to go down. Concerns about the decreases put the proposed plan on hold until further analysis and an OPM review could be completed. In 2005, the 2004 pay plan, including rates, was utilized.
- For 2006, DOI and FS Human Resources pay specialists agreed to utilize the mid level of the GS/WG pay scales in the rate calculation formula. By calculating the formulas with the mid-step, the majority of the positions would receive an increase in pay, however approximately 38 percent would still go down, primarily the Unit Leader and Strike Team Leader positions.
- In order to reduce these impacts, a proposal to “freeze” the rates for these pay bands at the 2005 level has been agreed to by DOI and Forest Service Fire Leadership. Once annual cost of living adjustments bring these rates to the 2005 levels, they would then increase at the same increments as the remainder of the pay bands.
- This may result in these ‘frozen’ positions not seeing an increase for several years. In this scenario 21 positions would still receive a decrease in pay, due to the classification of the

positions placing them in more appropriate pay bands. Statistically, these 21 positions comprise approximately 5 percent of all ADs hired annually.

- Many of the most critical and utilized positions filled by the AD community will have rate increase from 10 to 15 percent from the AD-1 through 5 rates used the past three years.
- DOI hires 69 percent of the casuals nationally; FS hires 31 percent. 75 percent of the casuals hired during the period 2000-2004 fell in the AD-1 through AD-4 rates classification with 50 percent of those being FFT2 (firefighter type 2).
- Adjustments to the plan can be made through an established annual review process. Details of this process are being worked on collaboratively with Human Resources.
- Annual rate increases to the plan will correspond to the “Rest of U.S.” Federal pay increases.
- The U.S.D.A. Forest Service and DOI AD Pay Plan is available at:  
[www.nwcg.gov/teams/ibpwt/documents/index.htm](http://www.nwcg.gov/teams/ibpwt/documents/index.htm)

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